n very strongly.
I think, a real weakness of
are so dedicated to getting
osed to be on time that we
h to take advantage of the
se, or to do the things we
and the Administration in
t. This really is one of our
we are getting better and I
see some major changes in
ng."

ee" meets every Saturday
Dwight Chapin had told me,
ouncil of the White House
It is held in Herb Klein's
hat the specifics of its dis-
cord except in limited para-
ee works from a formal
times adheres to and some-
bates range from solemn to
with the problem of how
avorably an Administration
e White House press corps
antly determined to present
and hostile light.
rst item on the agenda was
deman—signed with a large
questing the consensus on
participation in a satellite
ime Minister Heath. The
is would be great if it could
nt, otherwise it would look

a request by the Canadian
o take pictures of the Presi-
ferred.
quests from various maga-
on the President's reading
that this must be handled
se if the President were dis-
g even remotely frivolous,
re to pick it up and make it
ticism that would be used
er.
the possibility of the Presi-
ious types of informal tele-
n straight press conferences
as considered a matter for

cussion of the proper time
ent's State of the Union
in January. Should it be at
ne, the traditional hour? Or
ening, when it would reach
evision audience, a practice
by occupants of the White
n grew heated as the tradi-
let's-make-the-most-of-it
ne remarked with some dis-
the idea was to strengthen
and help him get reelected,
in hell it was so important
bout his timing. It was the
up there when he pleased
ed to. It was finally decided
as before the President.
e talked in the evening in
exactly what all astute Presi-
dents since the advent of television have done and will continue to do.)

Sixth item on the agenda was "how to counter the theme that the President is heartless and cold," and the discussion very quickly got down to a specific: the recent episode in which a little black poster girl had been turned away without having her picture taken with the President, an incident that had brought in its wake great and probably abiding rancor in the Negro community. Those who deplored the incident's effect on the President's image were explosive and blasphemous in their criticism of the way it had been handled. Those who were responsible said crisply that the President was working on a speech and it was decided it was best not to bother him: "It was a judgment." (It was admitted, however, that it was a judgment the President had known nothing at all about until the media went into full cry that night. It had not even been brought to his attention at the time.) Those who were responsible said defensively that the President can't see everybody who comes in. Those who objected said he had damned well better take half an hour, if necessary, to be photographed with a little black poster girl —especially since just a few days later he had been photographed with a little white poster boy. Those who were responsible said well, anyway, the little girl and her parents were going to be invited to a Sunday worship service in a couple of weeks, and maybe he could be photographed with her then. Those who criticized said that of course an apology could be made after an incident like that, but if it were made weeks after the event, "Nobody will hear, nobody will know and nobody will give a damn." Those who were responsible reiterated in a tone that showed they were not to be budged: "It was a judgment." And that ended that.

The discussion began at nine-thirty and ran to twelve-twenty. It was laced throughout, on every topic, with the Administration's obsession with the media—understandable, but in its way as crippling as the media's obsession with the Administration.

There were several in the meeting who remarked with considerable asperity that criticisms could not be evaded or avoided, that they would come even without fair grounds for them, that they were part of the burden this Administration carried and so to hell with it—let the President do what he thought best and stop worrying. But the dominant mood was a fretful obsession which, translated into action down the staff, successfully seems to thwart any presidential action or reaction that might be based on the simple justice of a situation, or the simple response to it that he might make if he were given the option that really counts most in the image of a President—the option to be human.

"I have known Richard Nixon for 20 years," he says thoughtfully, from his vantage point as one of the most independent, and most stable, men on the Hill, "and I like him very much. I think he has done a good job in foreign affairs.

"In domestic policy I am damned if I know where he is driving.

"A year ago he said the Federal Government had to balance the budget. Now he submits a budget which will be very badly out of balance. LBJ's unbalanced budgets became a major cause of the inflation we have now. I don't see how Nixon thinks he can unbalance the budget and control the inflation.

"It appears the President has changed direction radically.

"I still think the most important thing is to put the Government's financial house in order. I don't think the Government in the long run can continue to operate at a deficit. Sooner or later somebody has got to pay. I am afraid this new budget is strictly politics. It is such a sudden change from just a year ago. It just doesn't make sense to me, what he is attempting to do now. I think he has reversed his field completely, and I am afraid it is for political reasons.

"I don't think the President is going to have much success with revenue sharing, and there are great problems involved in the reorganization of the Cabinet. There again, he has offered us only a broad outline with no details, and it is difficult to understand what he is driving at.

"I have to confess this whole change baffles me."

Dick Kleindienst, deputy attorney general, is in his mid-forties; large, round face, large blue eyes that can stare at one blankly but are usually full of considerable humor and life; very strong, very determined, a tough man. If he could get past the Senate, he might conceivably be head of the FBI someday.

"In a sense, I am executive officer for the department under the Attorney General. I see that the policies of the President and the Attorney General are effectuated by the 17 divisions of the department.

"In the area of civil disturbances, the President traditionally delegates to the Attorney General rather than the Secretary of Defense the responsibility of recommending when Federal troops should be used and how they should be used to quell civil disturbances, both in the District of Columbia and in the states. We have a pretty complete operation now, and I am, you might say, in a sense chief of staff of that operation.

"We haven't had the problems in that area that the Democrats had, such things as Watts, Detroit, Washington, Newark. Logically they would occur in a Democratic Administration and logically they should not occur under our Administration, because the Democrats are obligated for a lot of their political support to the black groups, which vote overwhelmingly for them, and therefore they hesitate about putting things in order when these groups create disturbances. We don't have that kind of relation and therefore we are able to respond more promptly and more efficiently without hanging back because of political considerations.

"When one of these situations has arisen, it has caused a great outcry from the black leadership because of the pressure on the Democratic President not to do much about it at the start for fear he will be charged with 'repression' and 'attack on black rights.' This has usually been accompanied by the threat that, 'If you do take strong measures, we'll go back to our people and suggest that the Democrats are as bad as the Re-

continued

publicans and they might as well vote Republican.' Ramsey Clark, the last Democratic Attorney General under Johnson, was particularly susceptible to this kind of pressure—as susceptible to pressure as anyone has ever been in the United States Government.

"Our approach is based on plans, intelligence, quick response. We have people in place, we serve notice that disturbances are not going to be permitted to get out of hand and if they do get out of hand they're going to be stopped right now. The whole atmosphere on that changed at once on Inauguration Day, 1969. I was down here within a couple of minutes after the swearing in of President Nixon and I immediately put plans into operation to control any possible disturbances at Inauguration or after. There could have been disturbances on the first anniversary of the death of Martin Luther King and they did not occur. There could have been violent disturbances at the time of Cambodia and they did not occur. This is because we advised people in advance that preparation of Federal troops was being undertaken, and we said to them in effect, 'You can speak, but beyond that, when you get into violence, we are going to stop it right now.'

"They can't threaten us because they vote against us anyway.

"At the same time, we have cooperated in every possible way with all these dissenting groups, working with them to determine how they can march, what units will be on hand to control violence and what elements in their own ranks can be depended upon to help us control violence. Our purpose is to make it easier for them, not more difficult, and the fact that we have made it easier is proved by the record and it is one reason why riots and disturbances have not come back. [This was pre-Mayday '71.] We've used a reasonable, evenhanded approach.

"On the race issue as it involves these disturbances and law and order in the country, whether we get credit or not I firmly believe that we turned the corner to end the demonstrations. I think we have gained credibility in winding down the war, revising the draft and providing opportunity for young blacks to make their way economically.

"In the area of street crime and general city crime, 23 cities of a hundred thousand or more have been having a steady decrease in crime in the last two years. Statistics generally over the country have seemed to be going up a bit, but our statistics here in D.C., which is kind of a pilot project on what can occur, show that crime can be controlled and is being controlled.

"As for political crime such as assassination and kidnapping, in terms of numbers and impact, the effect on society is minuscule. It's only important as it is dramatic.

"Organized crime is another area where in motive power, determination and organization, more is being done by this Administration than was ever done before.

"As far as fighting crime, if you use traditional techniques, you're going to get no place. A gangster or criminal who is brought to the stand can always intimidate or buy other witnesses and just subvert the judicial process.

"Congress provided that we could go to electronic surveillance, which Ramsey Clark again refused to use before passage of the bill, and announced he would not use if the bill became law. This was an open invitation to them to know that the Government was not going to do anything. We have straightened out that situation too. The Attorney General has authorized 250 electronic surveillances. This has brought the indictment in 18 months of between five hundred and six hundred major criminals.

"The court order which covers electronic usages requires that the Attorney General must state specifically what the need is, must specify what is going to be used. The court then grants authority for a given number of days. If you are not able to get what you want in that time, then you can go back and get the time extended. Upon indictment, all the evidence secured by wiretapping and other electronic means is immediately made available to the defendant and his attorney so that they know what is going to be used against them.

"I predict that in a reasonably short time, the narcotics problem will be stabilized and then reduced down to a normal irritant, rather than the major one that it is now. Congress has given every dollar we have asked for in this area. A great deal of this is due to the personal confidence that Congress has in John Mitchell and in this department. Congress has given us all the money we asked, clean across the board.

"Given a few years when the full impact of these revisions and these new programs and planning and all this money can be felt all across the land, there's going to be a strong resultant effect on the statistics of crime.

"These civil libertarian bastards complain about what we are doing, but the fact remains that we are clearing up many of these problems.

"In all of these areas you have to do it with vigor and determination and honest people who don't care for the political consequences but go ahead and fight crime. You can't do it with weak, opportunistic, chickenhearted bastards."

He is in his mid-thirties, dark, stocky, round-faced, soft-spoken; a former White House staff member who left because of a gradual disillusionment with the way the political side of the operation was being run, particularly in the area of press and congressional relations.

"I am really disturbed by the general inflexibility of the staff and its unwillingness to allow the President to deal with Congress in a spontaneous fashion . . . although, of course, if the impetus for this kind of approach doesn't come from the top, then maybe one shouldn't blame the people down the line too much.

"I feel the President could do a great deal with a few corny gestures toward members of Congress—that is, what people who don't understand the human nature of politics might consider corny. Sometimes a quick handshake, or a call about some personal matter, or a joke about some problem in a man's district or state can really make a member feel good toward the President. I think he should do more of this, particularly with his own Republicans. After all, as somebody has said, 'You want to keep your own troops turned on.' I don't think the President has succeeded in doing this.

"In the same fashion, I find quite disturbing the attitude of the President and the top [illegible] press corps. Even if they are bastards [illegible] stantly looking for excuses to attack the A[illegible] still I think they could be mollified a b[illegible] contact. I feel that the President is basi[illegible] this, having been hurt so often by the pr[illegible] he should be able to overcome this to some [illegible] a little more cordial toward them. The [illegible] flected all through the staff, particular[illegible] office. It makes things more difficult th[illegible] be for the Administration, in my opinio[illegible]

"At the same time, of course, I [illegible] the press is so hostile that the Administra[illegible] got to be right on everything. It can't [illegible] stance, to have a phony witness in the B[illegible] can't afford any personal or economic [illegible] part of any member of the Administr[illegible] simple reason that the press tolerance [illegible] to Democrats simply does not exist you a[illegible] I know Ed Muskie, for instance: he's [illegible] what limited grasp and somewhat limi[illegible] who is frequently banal, indecisive, [illegible] generally inconsiderate with the press. [illegible] there is a built-in tolerance toward De[illegible] dates which prevents the press from [illegible] really get out to the public with the [illegible] hammering they devote to Nixon's [illegible] are so anxious to find an alternative to [illegible] will build up almost anyone and give [illegible] fit of the breaks in the process.

About ten days before I w[illegible] to leave town I began [illegible] staff to find out what h[illegible] the President's answers [illegible] tions. Margita White [illegible] she was telephoning various p[illegible] Days passed without an answer. [illegible] fore my departure she said she th[illegible] making progress: Alex Butterfield [illegible] be seeing the President, and had [illegible] The next day she called back: the [illegible] he was very sorry, he had been to[illegible] swer as fully as he would like. [illegible] on it, he hoped I would understan[illegible] along by mail in due course. I sa[illegible]

Apparently the lengthy del[illegible] out was caused by the fact that ev[illegible] that he had already given the ans[illegible] The universal question then be[illegible] blame? And if I am, how can I fi[illegible] cuse? When someone finally go[illegible] with a direct question he got a [illegible] the mystery was solved in half a [illegible]

In this, as in all administ[illegible] line, in the White House, is s[illegible] shortest distance between tw[illegible] become very timid abou[illegible] though he were a reasonable [illegible] a good thing; for them, for [illegible] country.

The press (half section with [illegible] most complex man who has [illegible] House. He doesn't have any [illegible] is close to him. [illegible] all he seems to have is Eve[illegible]

"He definitely tries to get a[illegible] The anti-press feeling permeates th[illegible]